164 Since then the Lake Barundi have not changed much as
165 regards their physical and mental constitution, but the individual tribes were struck by a terrible epidemic of sleeping sickness and were reduced to scarcely a third of their original numbers, so that in 1911 I found most of the formerly flourishing settlements deserted and laid waste. Fortunately the stinging
[136] fly, Glossina palpalis, which carries the infection, has not penetrated into cool, windy, upper Urundi, and it probably never will since it does not find favorable conditions there.

4. Mental Traits

000 At this point little will be said about the mental traits of the Barundi since they can be adequately inferred from the detailed descriptions of their life and of their material and intellectual culture which will follow. Therefore, I shall give only a few data about the disposition, temperament, and character of these three large population groups which differ so considerably from each other.

Of the Batwa, the more primitive, freer Forest Batwa
151 are also much freer mentally than those who have settled among the Bahutu and Batussi. Like all hunting tribes, they are characterized by their extraordinarily sharp senses, the superiority of which is very often experienced and still feared by the Bahutu as they advance against the forest in search of
563 arable land. As long as he can still hunt and live, freely roaming the forest, the Mutwa is very proud of his independence and looks with contempt upon the Muhutu wretched and bent low tilling his field, and also on the Village Mutwa living outside the forests who has to earn his living painfully either by working in the fields or as a potter or blacksmith. Toward
609 a European the Mutwa is in most cases, if not hostile, at any rate shy and ostensibly indolent, for even in peaceful intercourse he is afraid of the sorcery and formidable powers of the Whites.

563 [13] The Village Batwa are in all circumstances shy and
157 cringing as a result of their social position as pariahs, of which

563 they are reminded daily in living with the two other higher
157 classes of the population. Under this social pressure, their natural talent has been turned into cunning and craftiness. However, the Forest Batwa are quite proficient in these arts also.

Being shrewd and realizing their position fully, the Batwa
563 are friendly toward the Batussi, whereas they regard the Bahutu agriculturalists who destroy the forest with fire and axe as the robbers of their freedom, and this is the case both in Ruanda and in Urundi. Just as in Ruanda King Musinga himself keeps an
[644] entire settlement of Batwa at his court in Nyanza, preferring to entrust the protection of his person and the maintenance of order to these pariahs hostile to the Bahutu, so also in Urundi most of the Batwa are to be found near the residences of the chief where they find work and a livelihood in the service of the Batussi more easily than anywhere else except among the Bahutu. This is a symbiosis of the two numerically weaker population elements against the subjugated Bahutu, a people who number millions, within which both groups derive advantage.

The over-all character of the Barundi is provided by the large mass of the Bahutu, for although the Batussi are in fact the most striking members of the population because of their external appearance and their ruling position, they are too much in the minority, and in the majority of customs and external forms of culture they have assimilated with the Bahutu. Mentally, however, they are quite different from the Bahutu.

Like all Bantu, the Muhutu is by nature intelligent and
157 has a lively, sanguine temperament. This original trait is apparent in Urundi and in Ruanda wherever the hand of the Batussi rulers does not weigh upon them too heavily, i.e., more so in Urundi where the rule of the Batussi has never been as despotic as in Ruanda, and, in Urundi, most of all in the northwestern region, independent of the kingdom, where the chief, Kilima, is himself a Bantu or of mixed blood (see pp. 162, 168, 188 [these pages not translated]), and also in the far south and in the lowland areas of Lake Tanganyika and the Ruzizi River. The mental agility, loud speech and lively gestures of the Bahutu are nowhere as noticeable in Urundi as there in the

● 157 northwest. In spite of their impulsive behavior, the Bahutu are incapable of any strong exertion of will. They are conservative out of inertia and indifference, and for this reason they cling to the old, habitual concepts and customs. A marked tendency toward everything mystical and supernatural works in the same direction, in spite of the rough sensuality of their physical nature. Much good-naturedness is apparent in their social behavior to their equals and in their warm love for children.

In his contacts with others, whenever no higher class Mutussi is present, the Muhutu is cheerful, loud, and talkative, but in the presence of a Mutussi superior he is serious and reticent. When the Muhutu is able to relax, his imagination is active and is expressed in naïve boasting and bragging. He likes to cheat his fellow countrymen and foreigners and is liable to use physical force if he considers the other person weaker. [609] The European is sure to be told lies by him at first and to have him soon turn impertinent if he does not know how to command his respect. If the European manages this, as the Mutussi always does, the boasting of the Muhutu soon turns into slavish docility and cowardice. This is also the case when he is confronted by serious danger, for example, in war, unless his fear of the Mutussi ruler [14] is even greater than his cowardice and forces him to commit acts which look like the result of great courage and self-imposed discipline. In reality the Bahutu of Urundi have become slaves in thought and desire, as a result of the four centuries of despotism by the Batussi, although theirs is not so slavish an attitude as that of the Banjaruanda [Ruanda] under their monarchic Hamitic rulers.

563 157

For the keen observer this enormous influence of the relatively small Batussi minority upon the large mass of the Bahutu is at first impossible to understand, for he soon realizes that the Batussi are by no means the ideal men they seemed to us to be from the first descriptions by Count von Götzen, Dr. Kandt, and others.

080

800 years before our era. To him is attributed the erection of the lotus column in the Temple of Karnak.

[141] 2.10 meters. /29/

142 They have well-proportioned limbs, regular features, a straight nose, thin lips, and they present striking resemblances to the Egyptian Pharaohs. Like Ethiopians, the Batutsi are characterized by a brown complexion with reddish undertones, at least in some types, and by a somewhat elongated oval face.

● 157 Usually gay, they are easily approachable and impress others with their noble, slightly haughty but polite manner.

141 While the average stature of the Batutsi is estimated at 1.79 meters, that of the Bahutu is 1.67 meters. The latter are stockier and shorter, with less regular features. Their muscular strength is 147 greater than that of their masters, no doubt because of the heavy work they perform.

152 As a whole, the Bahutu are less appealing, less polite, and shier than the Batutsi. When angry they cannot control themselves 577 as well as the latter, but on the other hand they are simpler and have more rigid mores (1).

515 181 1. Most of the great chiefs are polygamous or keep concubines in their many domains. The simpler Hamitic herders, who are in the majority, are usually monogamous and of a sterling moral character equaling that of the Bahutu. One might even add that those who lead a pastoral life could give the Bahutu advice in matters of decency.

h[i.e., the Batutsi - AnalysE]

595 One can easily imagine the troubles and conflicts caused by an excessive number of wives and children.

The history of the Hamitic princes of Ruanda contains "pages soiled and as if bloodied by the tale of passions which set them one against the other and which, unleashed with brutal violence," eventually gave rise to tragedies and palace revolutions. Family unity and family spirit have never gained anything from polygamy. The history of the Hamites of Ruanda is here to prove and confirm this.

644 The king's mother held first place among the harem princesses, and reigned along with her son. She was "shown the most respectful consideration, and whoever wished to obtain some favor from the monarch had no better recourse than to see her first."

●157 643 It has been said that a people must be well disciplined in order to grow prosperous and powerful. The Hamites' strength resided in their courage and organization.

Those who know the Hamites cannot but admire among their qualities perseverance in an undertaking and obedience to chiefs. One must recognize in these political and diplomatic beings, and this is to their credit, a thorough self-possession and great calmness. As true leaders, they rarely give way to anger, and their violent feelings rarely show.

868 Their apprenticeship to life begins early.

From childhood on, indeed, the young Batutsi devote themselves to real exercises in sports, under the supervision of the Mwami or of the great chiefs. They practice endurance and bravely bear the fatigue of the lengthy and frequent exercises of guhamiriza (dances indigenous to the Batutsi). For many years they remain as pages (intore) in the service of the Mwami or of the provincial governors, in order to be trained to life and to win the favors of currently powerful figures. /44/

614 with their totems or even with other animals, to render them harmless
825 or to excite them against their enemies.

This, however, is a belief that will soon disappear, for the Banyarwanda take small notice of their totems nowadays.

538 As far as oral literature and folklore in general are concerned, one may assert without risk of error that the Banyarwanda have no reason to envy the neighboring peoples.

There may be few Black groups who managed to preserve so many and such ancient traditions, made all the more precious by the fact that they help us understand more than one facet of their history. This will be shown readily /61/ in the course of this work. We believe that the Hamites, who are given to the things of the mind and have organized the country methodically, must be justly regarded as the chief authors of this literary development.

181 The Bahutu of Ruanda owe to these same Batutsi the appreciable advantage of being less backward, less "primitive" than many of their fellow Bantu of Central Africa. Because they were less isolated than most of the members of the tiny neighboring states at the time of European penetration, the Banyawanda found themselves in a situation more favorable to the progress of civilization thanks to the centralization of the Hamitic state.

171 The inhabitants of Ruanda, as we have just pointed out, have more than one trait in common with the other African tribes. In speaking on the subject, Maurice Delafosse provides the following explanation, "The African Negro peoples, as different from one another as they may seem to a superficial observer, have a unified character which may be attributed to their common ethnic origins and to the relative similarity of the physical, economic, and social environments where they first developed and where they later evolved." (1)

1. Les Civilisations négro-africaines /Negro African Civilizations/.

● 157 As for the reader who wishes to know what to think of the Blacks, we must answer in all sincerity that it is very difficult to

●157 make precise and definite judgments about their temperament and mentality. The factors involved are so complex that it is easy to be misled and influenced by racial prejudices or by lack of knowledge of this strange people.

Much has been written on the subject. We shall present as ours the following opinions, which we have summarized (2). /62/

> 2. They were given by a civil servant of the Educational Service of Uganda and published in an American journal. (Communication of Rev. Fr. Joire of the White Fathers.)

An observer will note that the Black has many characteristics quite different from those of the white race. These characteristics may be divided into two groups: those that would help him climb the ladder of civilization and progress, and those that would be a handicap, a hereditary taint of which he must beware, for they might become a serious impediment to the progress of his race.

I. Let us first consider the assets.

Patience. Among the Whites, who are usually so quick, who cannot bear delays, and who are the foes of laziness, anger and impatience are always lurking just below the surface. When we come into contact with the Blacks, on the other hand, we are surprised by their patience and their endurance in suffering.

Joviality. There is no doubt that the Blacks have a basic joviality which, however, varies considerably in degree among the several tribes....

Arts and crafts. Ornamental designs (sculpture on wood, ivory, gourds, etc.; designs on pottery and bark cloth, basketry, beadwork, mats, etc.) show quite remarkable taste and skill but reveal hardly any progress, innovation, or improvement, or none whatever. The Blacks seem marvelously gifted for imitation but lacking in inventive genius (1).

> 1. We believe that the true reason for this is the isolation in which they have lived.

●157 Eloquence. It was no doubt necessary to cultivate loquacity in lands totally ignorant of the art of writing. Whatever the reason, there is no doubt that the Blacks find it easier to speak endlessly than to remain silent.... It does not occur to the Blacks to limit their speeches to pertinent data. /63/

Loyalty. Among the various peoples of East-Central Africa with whom I have been in contact, I have always found a remarkable degree of loyalty in return for the confidence placed in them.

Instincts. In my opinion, they have those of the most primitive peoples. Among those instincts, some may be classed among the characteristics beneficial to the Blacks.

1. First, the religious instinct. I do not believe that a "skeptic" ever existed among the true Black primitives. He is a by-product of civilization.

2. Perspicacity. The Blacks seem gifted with a mysterious power to judge strangers.... This gift of insight, which enables them to perceive the characteristics of a foreigner, is enviable. I do not mean to say that every black man possesses it individually to a remarkable degree, but collectively they seem able to judge a foreigner in practically no time. This is applied to the Whites, who no sooner arrived are granted a surname by the natives. If this name is not flattering, it will be used without his knowledge.

II And now, a few words on the shortcomings of the Negroes of Central Africa.

Duplicity. Lying is a "cultivated" art among our Africans.... It is quite likely that this is a familial practice, or else how could one explain their great skill in this art? It must be in part the result of circumstances, for primitive people regard it as a natural means of protection.... As a result, the Blacks have little if any sense of honor and place ruse on a much higher level than truth.

157 461 Laziness. There have been few occasions for the Blacks to develop habits of industriousness and sustained effort. /64/ As a rule, nature was very kind to them, supplying them with essentials even where the population was densest. Their needs were few apart from their own subsistence and that of their livestock. The rains were seasonal, and sowing time depended upon them. In the villages those

157 461 were the times of hard work for all able-bodied persons who could wield a hoe. Once sowing time was over, why cultivate further? The busy times were intermittent, therefore, and even those people who were most inclined to work had nothing to do but sit for a good half of the year, unless a war should bring them to their feet. It is obvious that such a state of affairs does not lead to the development of industrious habits and sustained application to work.

157 Immorality. I fear that I won't be contradicted if I say that the Black is immoral.... How could one expect these "child-peoples," who live such a carefree and easy life, to acquire habits of abnegation and self-restraint? When the evangelization of these primitive tribes was begun, it was not easy to establish among them such habits of morality as befit a Christian people (1).

1. We have good reason to believe that the Banyarwanda may be classified among the least corrupt. The taboos and traditions that prevail among them act as a check against profligacy.

[609] Mistrust. Centuries of struggle to the death among the various African tribes have engendered... a certain attitude toward foreigners which makes it very difficult for a well-intentioned person to lead them as far as he might wish on the road to progress....

To conclude. If the previous lines do not contain an exact description of the African in general (for there are no generalizations applicable at once to one and all), /65/ I hope nevertheless not to have been guilty of injustice toward the Blacks in describing them. If only they could make the most of their assets and persevere in conquering their shortcomings, then no doubt a fine future would be open to them.

The same author adds that if one could persuade them to develop a civilization peculiar to their race, instead of slavishly giving way to their natural aptitude for copying that of others, this would be a good contribution to the glory of humanity and a denial

●157 of the common assertion that the Blacks are of such limited intellectual capacity that it is impossible for them to attain the habitual level of civilized men (1).

> 1. If one were to draw a mental portrait of the Batutsi, one should praise their intelligence, their sense of discipline, their organizational talent, and their stubborn will. Since every coin has two sides, however, one should add that the great Batutsi chiefs are far more immoral than the Bakutu.

.... Experience of the African mentality, the author goes on to say, has shown that a number of things that one might be tempted to discuss with assurance must be stated with reservations. The fact is that the Blacks are a mass of contradictions to the Whites.... This is said... to suggest that the hastiness of such conclusions must stand in reverse ratio to the experience that inspired them.

This could hardly have been said with greater tact and restraint.

000 General Mangin, an experienced colonial well acquainted with African matters, makes the following remarks on the same subject, "When we judge the Black race, we must not lose sight of these basic facts: until the middle of the nineteenth century, the African, kept isolated by nature, came in contact with no higher concepts.

"Europe, on the other hand, witnessed the development of the Mediterranean civilizations, which benefited from broad exchanges among themselves and with Asiatic civilization. Writing came from Egypt through Phoenicia and Greece, /66/ Asia invented a number of alphabets while Europe invented none. Through the Arabs and Mongols, Europe unknowingly benefited from important contributions of Indian and Chinese origin: compass, paper paste, and gunpowder, for example. In short, the European peoples have evolved slowly over the past 3,000 years or so, in contact with all civilizations

644 [343] One sees standing about what seem to be huge baskets covered with thatch roofs. They are granaries where the food of the employees is kept. The storeroom is the king's favorite spot. He takes pleasure in hoarding there the most disparate objects: fabrics, crockery, furniture, and trinkets of all sorts. It is said that it gives him infinite [157] pleasure to survey his "bazaar" and to handle the goods piece by piece, away from all prying eyes.

It is easy to imagine the life and bustle that prevail at court and in the capital.

The entire nation dwells in the person of the king. He alone represents it. Since the State is identified with the king, he alone is eternally mentioned. "Everything is done for his sake. Justice is the king's justice, troops are the king's army, the nobility fights for him.... The monarch is absolute master and naturally has full and complete command over the property owned by his subjects, and when he takes it he is only taking what belongs to him.... Whoever is born a subject must obey without question...."

This short account of the history of Louis XIV's reign fittingly describes the rights exercised by the Hamitic kings of Ruanda. As a result of this concept and attitude on the part of the Blacks, nearly all the clans or family groups which make up the population of Ruanda have a role to fulfill at court, not so much for the welfare of the realm as for the pleasure of the king. The functions they must exercise are many and vary with the nature of the people involved and the products of the soil on which they live. Some of the posts derive from historical circumstances. Among these offices, some are regarded as an honor and privilege and others as a chore. Some offices are also assigned as punishment or /352/ revenge for misdeeds which were committed in the past by ancestors and the very memory of which has been lost. Most of those posts amount to actual bondage for their holders.

Positions of a mere utilitarian nature are by far the most numerous.

644 538 It is surprising to hear that literary pleasures and entertainments are included in the court program and even stand in a separate category. By the sovereign's side, indeed, there stand official historians and